

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS LOWELL
CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**SHIFTING GEARS PROJECT
NORTH ADAMS**

INFORMANT: CHRISTINE KELTON

INTERVIEWER: WILLIAM BEER

DATE: MAY 10, 1989

W = WILLIAM

C = CHRISTINE

SG-NA-T002

NOTE: Throughout the interview informant Christine Kelton speaks very softly and because of this many of her comments cannot be transcribed.

W: This is William Beer and I am interviewing Christine Kelton for an oral history interview for Mr. [Peepler?], Senior Honor Social Studies. Christy, where were your parents born and raised?

C: Um, let's see. My Mom was born in North Adams and she was raised right across the road here in the town of Florida by my two grandparents. And my father was born in Philadelphia and he also was raised there by his two parents. [Beginning of comment unclear] in Philadelphia.

W: What brought your father to this community?

C: Well um, it's kind of a long story, because my parents, both of them, after they had graduated from high school they both went on to college. And they went actually into Christian colleges. And while they were there they [unclear] missionaries. So my Mom, I forget what mission she was with, but she went to study french in Switzerland. Yeah, french in Switzerland and my father also, who was with a different mission went to study french in Switzerland. And while they were there they met. And as things go they got married. And uh, they were (--) Well my Mom has roots back here. And so when they, they were missionaries over in Europe for quite awhile. And then when they came back, they use to come back to visit my grandparents, both here and in Philadelphia. And I think it was in [76?] when we returned to the states to stay we stayed with my Gram for awhile and then we moved down to [Charlemount?] which is on the other side of the mountain. And uh, one night my Dad just got an idea that (--) The house here that we live in, this is my grandfather's barn, that they should remodel it. And so they started

working on that and that's kind of how we came to be in this area. Basically I guess it's because of my grandparents though, they live right across the road.

W: Do they work in this area now?

C: Um, yes they do. My Mom works currently now, well actually both my Mom and my Dad work in Williamstown. And my Dad is also going to the state college full-time while working. But yeah, both in the area.

W: Um, is this a permanent residence?

C: Um, right now it is. Uh, a few years ago we lived in New York where my Dad was the principal of a, of a Christian school. And we use to, we kept this house here, [few words unclear] down there. We use to come home for two week intervals or so during the summer, just like vacation time. But since we moved back in 85 we've had it as a permanent residence. Um, whether or not it will always be a permanent residence, I don't know. My parents really like the house here and also like I said before, my grandparents living across the road play a big part in it. So for the time I would say yes.

W: Okay. Um, do you know where your grandparents were born and raised?

C: Um, I believe both my Grandparents on my Mom's side were born in, right here, well in the town of Florida. Um, my Gram's family was originally, both here parents came over from Sweden, but they, she grew up just down the road opposite from here. And my grandfather, his parents died when he was young, but he lived up here with his aunt. They both were up here too.

W: Um, let's see. Um, where did they work? Did they work in North Adams?

C: Uh, yes they did. Um, I guess (--) I don't know where my Gram worked when she was young, but she's been retired now about maybe I would say five years or so, but for like the past seventeen years before that she worked for the town of North Adams as well a private bus driver. She use to carry in children with special needs and things like that. And my grandfather, I don't know how long he's been retired, but he use to be a carpenter. And he built actually many of uh, well besides his house he built Whitcomb's Summit and also he helped to build the Golden Eagle, which is on hairpin turn, but that's not the original one there now because it's been hit a few times by trucks and things. So um, I'm trying to think. I don't know, he had to retire from that because he had heart attack and [cannot transcribe rest of comment-speaks to softly].

W: Um, do you remember anything, or have you learned anything about your great grandparents?

C: Um, the only (--) Uh, let's see. On my Gram's side, I never knew my great grand, I mean great grandparents, because like my grandfathers parents died when he was quite young. Um, I know, I've heard a little bit about my grandmother's mother and they use to

call here "Little Gram" and she stayed with them when my Mom was young. And I don't really know very much about her, but on my Dad's side I knew my great-grandmother for like um, I could say until I was about eight or so and she was um, she was quite [few words unclear]. And I remember her. It's just like going down to Grandma's house and living with her and playing games with us. And she lived with my grandparents then, because her husband had died and she couldn't take care of herself. Besides that I don't really know too much about them. [Comment unclear]

W: Do you have other relatives around in this area?

C: Uh, yes I do. In fact um, well my only relatives really who live here are from my Mom's side. My aunt lives two houses down from us. And my cousin, Herb's daughter use to live right below our house, but then they moved to Indiana. And my Aunt and Uncle lived, um, my Mom's brother lives on the other side of the mountain down towards the Greenfield way. That pretty (--) Um, [unclear]. Oh, I have a few, quite a number of cousins I guess. Actually second and third cousins live here. And great aunts and uncles who don't live here, have a house here and come up and visit.

W: So would you say your family is pretty much in this area, or [few words unclear]?

C: Well my Mom's family is pretty much in this area, but I guess because I lived here [unclear]. If I haven't lived here I'd you know, come back here so much that it's more like this is my family. My Dad's (--) We're close to my Dad's family too, but we don't see them as much. And most of them it's either in the Philadelphia area or right down around there.

W: Um, well what kind of work experience have you had in this area?

C: Uh, let's see. In this area? Um, well two summers ago I babysat for a lady who was [up over the mountain?] and she owned a small business where she made jams and jellies and things herself. And she had a little baby who was maybe about six months old. And I use to watch him during the summer and you know, take him for walks and do things like that. And besides that um, for the past five years or so I have um, two cousins, well they're my second cousins, they lived down the road from me. Both of them work and are pretty busy and I usually come over and vacuum their house for them on Saturdays. And I've done (--) That's, I don't know, sometimes I do other odds and end things for them. Stack wood, wash their cars [unclear]. And let's see. Last summer um, I worked as a lifeguard down at Windsor Lake in North Adams. And that was (--) In fact it was kind of strange, because I had never, I had been out there but I had never really worked there before. And that was, that was kind of interesting. It was a different experience working there. And right now I'm currently working at McDonald's for a short period of time, but that's not too bad. But once I start working this summer I don't think I'll be working there anymore. And I also for a brief month worked at North Adams State College helping, [unclear] preparation they called it, but it was really kind of standing around. It didn't seem there was too much to do, but that's about [unclear].

W: What kind of a perception of the people in this area have you gotten from working?

C: Um, from working? Uh, I don't know. I felt (--) Um, I think my perception is changing. When I first move into the area I hadn't, like I had lead like a really sheltered life. And I had, I don't know, I just like, I thought everyone was snobs. And I guess I just like didn't know anybody. And um, my freshman year, the summer of my freshman year I volunteered at the hospital and I met some people. And that was like, that kind of helped me get into knowing people. And um, then I also started (--) I swam for awhile. Used to go to the "Y", not competitively, but, and then I met some more people. And I guess I kind of in my own mind started to realize that hey, you know, you can't, just because you don't know someone you can't qualify them as snobs. Um, as far as work, I guess um, I don't know. I think in North Adams it seems there is a, there are groups. I guess it's kind of easy to stereotype as you know, they're on welfare or um, you know. Just, you look at them and you wonder you know, what they do. But I don't know. A lot of (--) I don't know. I guess I've learned more to try not to judge people, you know, [few words unclear]. It's just hard. I mean it's really easy to you know, stereotype people. And I think that was one big thing working at the lake last summer. I mean you'd get people who would be up there all the time and you'd wonder, gee, I wonder what they do for a living. So you know, I mean they worked night or something and you just don't know about it. [Unclear]

W: Um, do you think uh, how do you think North Adams compares to other cities in terms of job opportunities? [J: Um] For teenagers?

C: For teenagers? I would say if you're a teenager and you really want a job you can probably find one. Um, as far as it being something you might really enjoy doing, you probably, you're probably not likely to find that. Um, other cities I don't under, I don't really know, because I haven't. When I lived in New York I didn't really look very [unclear] or anything. Um, I guess maybe because it's smaller it doesn't have as many, you know, maybe different variety of jobs. But, like people like [few words unclear] you know, there's quite a number of different jobs out there if you really want to work. You know, people are talking about this summer working for you know, construction companies, or landscaping, or things like that. And I don't know, a lot of people waitress. You know, some jobs too require you to be older. So like you know, it's hard [unclear].

W: Um, what's one thing about living in this area that has benefited you most?

C: Um, I guess (--) I don't know. The thing I like (--) Well the thing I like most about the area is that in the Fall it's really pretty. And the Winter can be really harsh, but (--) Well last Winter wasn't, but they can also be really beautiful. And I guess the thing I benefit most from is like the beauty and view. Like in Spring when the trees start blossoming [unclear]. Like I don't know. It's just like something to go down a road and to see you know, the valley with all you know, the mountains going down. Um, what else have I benefited from? Um, I think, I think one thing that's helped me too is that

because North Adams is not really that big of a town as I've gotten to know more people I've sort of (--) Even though I don't live in North Adams I kind of felt more like I've become part of it, or something. Then I know like if I was in a big city I would feel a lot more alienated. And that you know, even something I might do, you know, it wouldn't really be recognized, but I feel maybe like more I belong I guess. I don't know.

W: Well the opposite was what are the least rewarding about the area?

C: Um, I guess the least rewarding (--) Um, maybe just from the point of view that it is [unclear]. I say it's good that it is small, but um, I think in a way too needs to get, I don't know if revitalized is the word, but um, it just, I think we need some new ideas and definitely to learn to help to change like some of the [few words unclear] many people have in North Adams. That you know, like you come (--) That's the big thing. I mean I know like some schools they're just like obviously from North Adams, you know. You know, and they have a view of you. You're like [few words unclear]. I don't know if that's really been unbeneficial to me, but it's bothered me about that you know, people can't view this area. You know, they can only look at one aspect of it and they don't see a lot of other aspects [unclear]. They don't see the people who are out there working hard you know, doing [few words unclear].

W: Um, how would you think living in this region has affected your attitude about social programs like um, welfare or food stamps [few words unclear]?

C: I guess that's hard, because um, I think I see welfare as a thing that there are people who need it. And I don't personally (--) I mean I consider myself a conservative. And personally I don't, I'm not one to just hand out money, but on the other hand I think you know, there are truly people who need it whether for one reason or another. If they can't work, or um, I don't know, if their family situation is really hard. But I guess um, it seems like I've seen people who receive welfare, or food stamps and yet these people go out and buy a satellite dish. Or they have things that maybe I don't even have, you know? And I wonder, well is this really fair? I mean these people (--) I'm helping to pay when I pay taxes for them to go do these things and yet I don't think I'd begrudge it so much if it weren't for the fact that many of them don't seem to even want to bother to work, or they take the point of view that um, or maybe I'm stereotyping them that you know, they can get more money off welfare than they can if they were working. Cause I understand that [unclear]. You want to make enough money to support your family needs and things, but I just, I don't, I don't know. I don't really like all of that. And I guess I see my Gram, she's like a really really kind and generous person. And through like the people she met when she could work she used to (--) I mean I saw her. She would like always be giving things for people. And like some people took advantage of her, you know? And I mean these were people who are healthy, able and could work and they didn't. I mean they were on welfare. They used to call her up you know, we don't have this, we don't have that. And you know, she would go down and she didn't have much herself and but you know, she'd always get for them. And I guess that bothered me you know, because here she is you know, sixty years old or whatever. And she's, you know, she's been a worker all of her life and she still works now. You know, she you know, works for a living. And

I get you know, I mean there are people I think who are truly you know, older people, people who are handicapped, or who have been disabled and I don't begrudge those people. I think that there should be ways and I think that we need to do things to help. [We need to improve the system] But I know of one lady who, she was on, I don't know, I guess she still is on welfare, but the thing I admire about her is that where she has a family but her husband left her. But instead of sitting around the house just being on welfare [coughs and excuses herself] she's gone out and she's furthered her education and she's striving so she can get off welfare. And I think [rest of comment unclear].

W: I know you've been brought up in a very morally [J: umhm] and righteous type of environment. How do you think, certainly North Adams has affected your views on certain issues like abortion and youth in Asia? How do you think North Adams does?

C: Um, you know it's strange. Um, well personally I [unclear]. And Youth in Asia I don't know. I don't, I guess if a person is ill to a point of view where I think that they can rationally make that choice you know, like if I stop breathing then I don't want to be revived, all right. But I think the whole thing is I personally, I don't like the issues now with abortion. Um, I mean I know many of the pro life people do [speaks too softly, cannot transcribe end of comment]. I don't understand how people can say it's not a baby, it's a fetus and they are willing to take the life. I say it's a baby [few words unclear]. And they so no, it's a fetus until it's born or whatever. And it was interesting, because today we got into a conversation in class about um, somebody brought up in class that there was a lady [few words unclear] who seemed really pushy in this community. And I thought well, hey I wouldn't want to be considered really pushy, but then on the other hand here's a person who is really standing up for what they believe you know? And maybe I should take a lesson from them. I don't know. It just seems like human life now is getting, I don't know, it's like a value on human life. You know, well now it's all right to take the baby's life, because it's not a baby anymore. You know, tomorrow. You know, I think that's the thing with the youth in asia too, because um, I don't think it's all right to feel somebody is old or they can't [unclear] or not. Can't benefit society you know, it's okay to pull it. I mean if they're critically ill and they choose to let their life [unclear], then all right. But I think both these things are leading towards um, I don't know, just consequences for our country and I think even individually. I mean personal choice [unclear] leading people down the wrong path.

W: How about capital punishment?

C: Um, I don't know, that's (--) I mean people say okay, on one hand you're for or you're against abortion. On the other hand how can you be for capital punishment? [Few words unclear] I guess I still am. I mean personally I think it would be very hard for me to ever have to say, okay this person did wrong, but I believe if you take a person's life cruelly and maliciously then I mean there has to be some consequences. Um, I think that's another thing. You know, people take people's life whether (--) All right, there are accidents. There are times you know, maybe, I'm not saying justified, but you know, when it happens you know, on the spur of the moment. But there's got to be come a point where people say all right, this is wrong. And I think that's another thing. No one wants

to admit anything is wrong anymore. You know, well this guy killed somebody, but oh he was insane so he can't be held responsible. But some where the blame has to rely on somebody. And it can't just be passed on to oh, it was society's fault, because who is society? [You make us society?] Capital punishment, um, I guess I would say I'm for it, but I think you have to be kind of careful [few words unclear]. Uh, I don't know. I guess you can go to the point of view where you would be so careful that it would just bog down the whole system, but there's got to be something that, I mean people are going to have to know that you know, you just can't murder somebody, walk away scott free, or have no repercussions from it.

W: How about war on drugs, or legalizing drugs?

C: I don't think you should legalize drugs at all. Um, the person we had in our school a while ago was talking about legalizing drugs and his point of view was that, well, alcohol and you know, such and such is legal, why not legalize them all? Well that's like saying, that's like opening a flood gate. I mean just because we have one problem, or something that can be abused and cause a problem doesn't mean that you have to allow something else to cause a problem. And I know there are, there are a few good points I've heard about legalizing drugs. They say that doctors would be able to control it more, but it just seems to me that it would, it would really cause mayhem. And I think the thing with drugs is that they're mind altering substances and they cause you to do things that you know, you wouldn't do in your right mind. And people use that as a way to escape reality and a way to somehow not to face their problems. I think it would be really bad for our country as a whole to legalize drugs.

W: What do you think of legalizing some drugs?

C: Such as?

W: Like marijuana.

C: Um, I don't think they should legalize. I mean I know there are some drugs that are legal now for certain medical purposes. Um, but as far as for general conception I don't think that the people need it.

W: Do you have any kind of a sense of pride, or do you lack a sense of pride in North Adams and this region?

C: I think I'm really proud of this region and that [few words unclear] you know, in the Berkshires. [Few words unclear] We are the Western part of Massachusetts. And even though we might not be that well known, we live in a really beautiful area. And many people come up to this area because of the trees or to see the foliage, especially in the Fall I think you know. You get the sense that you know, the tourists, they love to drive through here. And I think Williamstown too with all of the cultural events that go on there. And you know, you have [Lenox] and hopefully the MASS MoCA that will be coming too. I think that is a really good thing if it gets off the ground. And I guess I

would say like I feel proud of North Adams especially like at times when we have like Fall foliage [unclear] or something. I don't know, it just, that seems to bring people out and kind of say well, all right, we are a town. You know, we're individuals every day of the week, but on this day we come together and we recognize that we do share something in common. And I don't know, I guess I don't really have feelings of lack of pride. I have them at times I guess of conditions that I wish that were changed [few words unclear]. By far I think you know, I really like downtown North Adams. I mean in downtown North Adams nothing goes on, but it's kind of cute. I mean you have the Main Street you know, and the little shops. And the trees. They've really done a lot to make it look nice this time. [Sentence unclear] You know, and it's [unclear] to have a downtown where you can come down and not have to worry about [few words unclear].

W: What kind of pride do you think other people take?

C: In North Adams? Um, I don't know. I think, I think people (--) Uh, that's hard to tell. I think there are people who feel like I do. And I think people who get involved in things too, like whether you know, the softball league or the baseball league, or football leagues, or you know, any of those things out there, I think they have a pride of North Adams. And I think these things help them share part of the community, part of something. And I'm sure there are people who live in North Adams and New York, you know, who don't like to live there. But there are some, you know, there's really nice places in North Adams. And I think as an individual you just have to make the choice. I mean you can kind of take any situation either for the best or for the worst. And I think there are quite a few people who would probably take you know, the situation and say, hey maybe this isn't the greatest place to live, but look what we did out here. We have the hills, we have you know, we can drive not too far away. We can go to places. We can go to the movies, the theaters. We can go skiing you know. All right, so Boston is like three hours away or something, we still can go there. We can drive a little farther and go to the beach or something. So we do actually gain. I mean I don't know, it's not really all that bad an area. And like I said too, I think we benefit in a way not maybe having all of the problems that maybe big cities do have.

W: [Comment unclear]

C: [Laughs] I don't know.

W: You mentioned earlier that people from other communities made comments about oh, you go to school in North Adams. What do you feel about the schools in North Adams.

C: The school? Um, I guess I feel that teacher wise, at least the teachers I've had and I think I've been very fortunate to have really good teachers. There are teachers who care about you and you know, who not only care about you and your role academically, but took interest in your life whether it was you know, through sports or you know, just being there to talk as a friend. Um, the only thing I really don't like about our school is the fact that the building itself seems to be falling apart. I think the idea is really unique and it

could be really good. Um, I don't know, it's kind of (--) In a way it's almost easier going to school there because there aren't a lot of hallways and "classrooms" and you can get more of a sense of um, I don't know, just you always see people because you're walking around and the classrooms are open. So you get more of a sense, I don't know, maybe togetherness. That's probably not the right word. But I think on the other hand the only part that I really don't like is the fact that it just seems like the building needs a lot of more maintenance I guess.

W: Um, well academically what do you think is probably the most unstressed subject at the school?

C: Academically? That's hard. I would say personally probably [unclear]. I think because in most other classes you can take general, or [unclear], or honors that I would say most of your regular subjects are stressed. But I think the special programs like music, or art, or you know, even the foreign language. I mean they are there. [Few words unclear], but uh, can I stop this for a second. [W: sure] Okay. I'm back. [Few words unclear] Oh, I guess um, well the foreign languages are stressed because everyone has to take them, but I think that you can get a lot more into the foreign languages. And I think once you get up like into the higher, like four, you know, Spanish IV or V they try to make it more diverse, but I think on the lower level sometimes it almost, not a joke. I don't want to say that, but I don't know. Maybe it's from, because too that you have all different types of people in your classes where they try to make them so everyone can do all right in them. But I think they can stress foreign languages more. And uh, let's see what else. Like I said before, art, music. I think some people get the (--) I know I have the feeling that like gee, if you took art or something like that (--) Well not art, but you know, one of those classes that weren't in the "regular subjects" are or you know, above that, that was like different, or you know, it wasn't quite as good because it wasn't math. But I think there's you know, skills are really good. I mean I wish I (--) Sometimes I you know, I wish I knew how to sew, but I mean.

W: Almost like even more stress is placed on making an honors or a college preparatory curriculum and none on the subjects which [few words unclear].

C: Right, right. And I think recognition too is always (--) A lot of times people, people are recognized for sports. People are recognized for academics. Maybe not quite as much for sports, but you don't feel like the person who is really good in art, or if he's like you know, really good in music. And I think you know, individually that I mean, I know like we have SAT's and all right, that is suppose to show you how you do, or whatever. But the thing I have with them is like it doesn't take anything into account. Like whether you have this great ability to draw, or to write music, or to play music and I think you know that's really lacking, because [few words unclear] all right if your proficiency is in this area, you know, that's great and you should develop that. And you know, so maybe you can't get an A in math, or an A in this subject. But not that you shouldn't work hard in those subjects either, but I don't know, I think that may be lacking.

W: How do you think North Adams rates [few words unclear] other schools?

C: With other schools? Uh, that's hard to say. Um, from my perspective I think, I think we do pretty good, pretty well. Um, but we have (--) I think the honors program [few words unclear]. The students that come out of them seem to be able to hold their own. I think um, the only thing that maybe we don't rate against is the fact that we don't have maybe like more advanced courses, but on the other hand we don't generally always have the number of students required to take them here. And just because we have an A/B class doesn't necessarily mean that it's better than you know, another class. It just that it depends on the students and how hard they are willing to work. And I think generally um, I see students in Drury who are you know, as smart [few words unclear], or as educated as students from any of the other schools.

W: Um, okay. Uh, where are you planning on going to college next year?

C: I'm going to [Holton?] College, which is out in Western New York. I think it's located between Buffalo and [unclear], [few words unclear]. But it's about a six hour drive or so. And it's a Christian Liberal Arts College. It probably kind of reflects on my background. But I guess I kind of chose it because I grew up going to private schools, well christian schools all of my life. And I got (--) It was just like the things I learned were from a different point of view. And it kind of made, it made learning make more sense to me, if that makes any sense, but it did. And I kind of feel like these four years of my college life before I go to undergraduate school I want to have a base again. And this school seemed like it was (--) I have visited it in my junior year. And I don't know, it was weird because at the time when I came back I didn't want to go there at all. The more I thought it, the more I, I don't know. It just like kept coming back to my mind. So that's why I decided (--) I applied to it and they've accepted and decided to go. And um, I hope to major in, well I am going to major in biology. I hope to get through biology. Um, because right now I liked to learn to be a doctor. And I don't, I mean I don't know [unclear]. Maybe I'll get into it and say hey, this isn't for me. Um, maybe I will [few words unclear] a different profession. Teaching, something like that, but [few words unclear].

W: Do you plan on living in North Adams after college?

C: Um, you mean after I'm done all of the years? That's hard to say. I like the area. Whether or not I live in North Adams itself is questionable. I think I might very well live in the area. I think it would depend on if the work I found is suitable to you know, the field I was in and you know, whether or not I have family considerations, or things like that. But as far as you know, as far (--) From my personal point of view I mean, I wouldn't really mind living if not, I don't know about North Adams, but in the area, or region surrounding it. But I really, it's not a bad area at all.

W: Would you choose to live somewhere else if you had a certain choice? A certain area [unclear]?

C: Um, I don't know. I don't really think. I don't really know what to say. Just because I

think here we get like, like I said before, it's like you can leave here and go and get the sun in Florida, you can go [unclear] California or something. You can go visit North Carolina [unclear]. But I think one of the neat things about this area is like it gets warm in the summer, it gets up in the 90's, it gets hot, humid, but you have the Fall and it gets cool you know, where you can smell the wood stoves burning [few words unclear]. You have winter and you can see the trees with snow on them. And you can go skiing. And then you have the Spring. And I think I just like this area because it's like you can experience all of the different seasons here and yet you can still you know, travel to different areas. I mean we're not that far from Canada. you know, we can you know, go up there too. So I guess if I were to, I don't know, I'm sure I could be happy other places. I just, I wouldn't, there's not, there's not one place (--) I mean there's lots of places I'd like to live there and move there for awhile, but [few words unclear].

W: If you were to have children do you think North Adams would be a positive environment for them to be raised in?

C: [Unclear] I don't know. I guess um, positive environment? I suppose it would be. I think that really depends too of how their family life is at home and you know, the values you instill on your children and the priorities that you hold for them, or and for yourself. I'm sure anyway you go the environment can be good and you know could, your child could have a hard time. There are things in North Adams that, or in the area that wouldn't be [unclear]. I think that it's up to the families and the individuals to try to work at those kind of things. [Unclear] for the benefit of the children [unclear].

W: What are some good aspects of North Adams that you think are positive [few words unclear]?

C: Well from what I see (--) Like I said, I haven't really [unclear] because I haven't really lived in North Adams and [few words unclear]. But there seems to be, I don't know, I'm into sports, but there seems to be like peewee league and things like that for kids. I don't know, there's things like they can do at the "Y". I don't know. I just think that there is things you should get involved in. You could take your kids skiing, or bowling, do something like that. Miniature golfing, or (--) It just seems like if you really wanted to you can find something to do.

W: Do you think there are things that North Adams is lacking in?

C: [Comment unclear]

W: In terms of bringing your children up here.

C: Um, let's see. Well I don't know. I think, this is my own personal [unclear], but I think most [end of comment unclear]. I guess I can see their point of view. They don't want to have you know, organized teams and everything, so then everyone won't have a chance to play. But I think it's hard then once you get up to the high school level, because our school sometimes seems to be lacking in certain areas because we don't have

the experience. Um, besides that I don't know. I don't really know too much about that. I know we have like Cub Scouts and things like that. Girl Scouts [unclear] and things like that. So I don't know. [Comment unclear] I can't really think.

W: What kind of a future do you think is in store for North Adams?

C: [Unclear] I think I really, when I heard about that Mass MoCa I was like wow. I mean that's, I think it be really cool, because it would bring a lot of people into the area. I think not only that. I think it would put a certain amount of pride back into it. I know like I think people have pride, but I think it would put you know, North Adams, the Berkshires. You know this is where the modern museum of art is. And you know, people all of a sudden will equate you know, North Adams [unclear]. It's a nice place to look at, but there is something there. And I don't know, that would be really good. I know it probably could cause us problems, but I think you know, business wise it would be a big help. It might you know, draw businesses into the area. Um, people I guess (--) I don't know. I guess they would (--) I don't know how it would (--) I mean I'm sure there would be more people who move up to the area whether or not they move into North Adams. This would provide more jobs. It could also cause more congestion in traffic and I'm sure a lot of other things, problems would arise [unclear]. I guess right now I think North Adams is probably [unclear] pretty good future. And [few words unclear] is Mass MoCa. [Few words unclear], but I don't know. I think the area is slowly turning on. [Sentence unclear] But I think we're trying to make it now so that we don't [unclear]. You know a lot of smaller businesses [rest of sentence unclear].

W: Well there is a lot of concern about if Mass MoCA goes in they'll be a large attraction of rich people to this area. What kind of an impact would that have on the poor? And there certainly are a lot of poor people in this community.

C: I don't know. I think, that's hard to say. Gosh. I'd like to (--) I don't think it will really drive them away. I think you know, I'm sure they (--)

W: Well like for instance they're saying that [unclear] street would be completely re (--) [C: redone?] Yeah, redone. Either be completely torn down, or revitalize into luxury condominiums.

C: Yeah, I guess if that were to happen that would have a big impact of those people. I don't know. I mean if people, if the people who are poor can do their jobs or whatever, you know, get money [comment unclear] that would be good. I'm sure though that even if there were wealthy people [unclear] they'll have area they would let, I don't know if you'd consider them not slum areas [few words unclear], but areas that are maybe not quite to people's liking. And like even you know, take Washington for instance where you have you know, you have the beautiful besides the (--)

W: Undesirable.

C: Right the [unclear]. I guess I don't know. I really, I hadn't(--) You know, I guess I

think about it, but not (--) Sometimes. I think may there would be more a program maybe to reach like those who are homeless and things like that, because there would be more money to work with them at that time.

W: What kind of a place would Greylock [few words unclear]?

C: Greylock [unclear]. I guess from my point of view it would draw people in, like you said, it probably would draw lots of people in too. And I just think it would help to boost businesses and overall economically. And also just you know, that this is where something is, you know. Greylock [unclear] is a neat place. [Few words unclear] I live there you know, but maybe you don't live right next to it, but [unclear].

W: There's also a lot of question about North Adams becoming a very tourism oriented community. Do you thing there are harmful affects?

C: I think the harmful affects is, whether it's in tourism, or [unclear], not to rely on anyone for anything. I mean I guess the tourism we would have probably would be more year round, because ours wouldn't be like a seasonal attraction. But then and I guess with the museum it might be different because people you know, always tend to go to museums. But I think in any one thing you have to be careful and not to put all your eggs in the basket so to speak, because what happens if you know, for some reason or another you know, it folds or just isn't working well so they decide so you know, this wasn't good. [Few words unclear] at the people who maybe bought it or whatever, or running it are, and the people in the area are really hard hit you know? I mean some of them their whole livelihood is gone and there's nothing. There's a void there, there's a vacuum and there's nothing to replace it. So I guess that's one thing [unclear].

The other thing I guess would be that having a lot of different people come into the area might be, not hard, but you know, I'm sure it will bring a lot of different problems [unclear].

W: [Comment unclear]

C: Right, right. And I think it would, you know, bring new ideas into the area which is good. But I'm sure [rest of comment unclear].

W: What kind of impact do you think such a drastic change from an industrial factory type [unclear] wanting to turn cultural?

C: Well like you said, adjustment I think will be hard. But I guess for the people who would most, I wouldn't say most [unclear] take advantage of it, it seems like maybe they would have already have sort have been heading in that direction just because of the area we live in. You know you have you know, Williamstown Theater and Tanglewood and things like that. But, like so you know, the ordinary people like myself, I go to [unclear] sometimes, but um I guess it would just be different because you would all of a sudden you'd be operating from a different um, well with different people, you know? I mean like we were an industrial park before and sure there were people here, but now like you

said with tourism these people are going to be coming here for a reason. [Few words unclear] interacting [unclear] people. And you are going to have to learn to deal with them and you know, with their differences in culture and things like that.

W: A lot of people seem to think that Mass MoCA is just, it's not viable. It's really, the idea is too big for just a small community like this to grasp. A lot of people say that North Adams is just simply dying and there's just no future in store at all. What do you think about that?

C: Oh, no I don't think that's fair. Um, I don't know, maybe I'm just an optimist. I think it would (--) I don't know. I mean so North Adams is small, but it just seems like that we're not by ourselves, you know. There's Williams College and I mean it's being help funding by the state and all of these other things are going into it. And I don't really see (--) I mean I see problems like they're going to have to find you know, hotels and you know, improve roads and things like that, but I don't think that it's going to you know, it's not viable. And as far as North Adams dying, I mean sure we have gone through hard times, but I think we're trying you know, to work around it and find businesses. And I think it's going to start [few words unclear], but there's nothing we can do. [Few words unclear], or feel we can do it, we can change. That there is always help for it.

B: When future generations are studying the history of North Adams, which [few words unclear] what do you think (--) What one thing, what events do you think that certainly they'll be studying?

C: Well I would say probably like we've been talking about. The shift, well the shift from factories you know, to industrial. And now seemingly to a tourism centered place. I guess they'll probably study, I don't know, various accomplishments of people. Actually really I don't know. We don't really have anything too too spectacular happening in North Adams. [Both laugh] [Comment unclear]. The Drury High School basketball team [end of comment unclear]. I don't know. I guess we're not [unclear].

W: Is there any like single event [unclear] that will have so much impact on the city that (--)

C: Besides Mass MoCA you mean, or?

W: It could be Mass MoCA. Probably the biggest.

C: I think, yeah I think Mass MoCA will. I mean I don't know, maybe I'm being like really out in left field or something. It's just, I just feel like that would be something really really beneficial and it would really cause a big change, but I think it would really be for the best.

W: Well thank you very much Christine.

C: You're welcome.

W: And I guess that concludes this interview.

C: With William Beer and Christine Kelton.